Gauge conversion of Rangia-Murkongehalek

463. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 514 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 25th April, 2003 and state:

(a) whether the Ministry has prioritized the gauge conversion of Rangia-Murkongehalek portion of NF Railways in the list of priority projects for Tenth Plan;

(b) if so, the status thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Ministry will send the project to Planning Commission for clearance after due prioritization pending any positive reply from Defence Ministry on the subject?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The proposal has already been processed for approval of Planning Commission.

Project to improve functioning in Railways

464. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railways have decided to take number of measures to improve the functioning of railways in view of the large number of accidents occurred during 2003:

(b) if so, whether Railways have cleared an ambitious Rs. 31,000 crore project to reduce possibility of train accidents and employ the latest technology to strengthen weak rail bridges;

(c) to what extent this plan is aiming at totally eliminating collisions which constitute seven per cent of total accidents but accounts for thirty eight per cent of total fatalities;

(d) the total amount to be spent on prevention of derailments; and

(e) by when these projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a), (b) and (d) Though measures to improve functioning of Indian Railways, including safety preparedness, is a

continous process, the "Corporate Safety Plan" for the period 2003—2013 has been finalized and was laid on the Table of the Sabha on 19th August, 2003. The Plan states the objectives, targets and strategies for which the Indian Railways would be striving in the next decade. The document encompasses the broad priorities and time frame of the safety related works alongwith assessed approximate requirement of financial investments.

The Corporate Safety Plan envisages a safety action plan involving total investment of Rs. 31,835 crores for safety enhancement works in the ten year period. These works are directed towards continous reduction in risk level, enhancement of asset reliability, implementation of suggested system reforms and induction of latest technology etc. This also covers continous rehabilitiation, modernization and upgradation of assets including tracks, railway bridges, rolling stock etc. The allocation is likely to be made for works identified in the Corporate Safety Plan and not according to the type of accidents. The plan targets at substantial reduction in various types of accidents, including derailments.

(c) With the completion of track circuiting works, provision of block proving axle counters, data loggers and a comprehensive safety coverage proposed to be given by Anti Collision Device, it is targeted to eliminate collisions and consequent deaths by the end of 2012-2013.

(e) The timeframe for completion of these works would depend on the quantum of work involved over the entire Indian Railways and availability of funds from year to year. The project-wise requirement of funds may also undergo changes based on periodic reviews. Actual fund allocation for different safety projects would also depend on the *inter-se* priority various projects and the total fund availability.

Sky Bus Metro by KRCL

465. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the State-owned Konkan Railway Corporation Limited has unveiled the "Sky Bus Metro" mode of transportation and given their proposals to a number of cities and metros in the country;